

REMARKS

This Amendment is fully responsive to the non-final Office Action dated April 2, 2009, issued in connection with the above-identified application. Claims 1-9 are pending in the present application. With this Amendment, claims 1, 7 and 8 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments made to the claims. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

To facilitate the Examiner's reconsideration of the present application, the Applicants have provided amendments to the specification and the abstract. The changes to the specification and the abstract include minor editorial and clarifying changes. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments made to the specification and the abstract.

In the Office Action, claim 8 has been rejected under 35 USC 101 for being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Specifically, the Examiner alleges that claim 8 recites a program not residing on a "computer-readable medium." Therefore, claim 8 is interpreted by the Examiner as being directed to software *per se*, which is non-statutory. Claim 8 has been amended to point out that the program is stored on a "computer-readable storage medium," as suggested by the Examiner. Withdrawal of the rejection to claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. 101 is respectfully requested

In the Office Action, claims 1-9 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kato et al. (US Patent No. 5,809,447). The Applicants have amended independent claim 1, 7 and 8 to help further distinguish the present invention from the cited prior art. Claim 1 (as amended) recites the following features:

"[a]n interactive route guide device comprising:
a storage unit operable to store at least one table which defines a type of guide information to be provided for a route from a departure point to a destination point;
a guide information generating unit operable to generate guide information in accordance with the table in the storage unit;
an output unit operable to output the guide information generated in the guide information generating unit;
an input unit which a user operates in order to request guide information;

a request management unit operable to manage a content of a request inputted into the input unit and a number of times the request is inputted; and

an editing unit operable to edit the table, which is stored in the storage unit, to add additional information to the guide information to be provided for the route in accordance with the content of the request inputted and the number of times the request is inputted, which are managed by the request management unit.” (Emphasis added).

The features emphasized above in independent claim 1 are similarly recited in independent claims 7 and 8 (as amended). Independent claim 7 is directed to a method and claim 8 is directed to a computer program, and both claims recite steps directed to the features of the device of independent claim 1. Additionally, the features emphasized above in independent claim 1 (and similarly recited in independent claims 7 and 8) are fully supported by the Applicants’ disclosure (see e.g., Figs.10 and 11).

The present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 7 and 8) is distinguishable over the cited prior art in that an editing unit or step adds additional information to the guide information that is to be provided for a route to a user in accordance with the content of the request inputted and the number of times a request is inputted by the user.

In the Office Action, the Examiner relies on Kato for disclosing and suggesting all of the features recited in independent claim 1. However, independent claims 1, 7 and 8 (as amended) are now clearly distinguished over Kato.

Kato discloses a vehicle navigation device that provides route guidance by voice or the like in accordance with a preset route. In Fig. 1 of Kato, the system includes a voice data edit means 4c and guide voice alternation means 4d, which would appear to be the most relevant features with regard to the claimed editing unit of the present invention.

However, the features disclosed in Kato appear to be clearly different from that of the claimed editing unit or steps of the present invention (as recited respectively in independent claims 1, 7 and 8). As described in Kato, the guide voice alternation means 4d is designed so that in the case where the voice guidance cannot be outputted at a predetermined time (i.e., because the CD-ROM driver 17 is reading a map or other route guidance data), the voice guidance alteration means 4d alters the route guide voice data which has already been edited to

condensed data representing the minimum necessary quantity of information, and reads it out from the CD-ROM 3 after the judgement means 4e judges that the other reading of other data has been completed. More specifically, the guidance alternation means 4d in Kato alters the route guidance voice data such that only route guidance data for those phrases higher in priority are outputted (see e.g., col. 4, lines 5-25).

In other words, Kato actually teaches away from the present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 7 and 8, as amended) by deleting information from predetermined phrases already stored in the vehicle navigation device. This point is further supported by Kato in column 6, lines 50-65 where it indicates that possible alterations include “omission of a phrase relating to distance, changing a distance phrase in accordance with the remaining distance and cancellation of the guidance message entirely.”

To the contrary, the present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 7 and 8) adds additional information to the guide information that is to be provided for a route to a user. Additionally, the addition of information is based on the content of the request inputted and the number of times a request is inputted by the user. No such features are believed to be disclosed or suggested by Kato.

Based on the above discussion, independent claims 1, 7 and 8 (as amended) are not anticipated or rendered obvious by Kato. Likewise, claims 2-6 and 9 are not anticipated or rendered obvious by Kato at least by virtue of their respective dependencies from independent claims 1 and 8.

In light of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections presented in the Office Action, and pass the present application to issue.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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